

WHAT IS LYME DISEASE



www.dupagehealth.org/ftb

WHAT IS LYME DISEASE?

Lyme disease is transmitted by the bite of an infected deer tick, also known as the black-legged tick. Not all ticks carry Lyme disease and a bite does not always result in the development of Lyme disease. Since it is impossible to tell by sight which ticks are infected, it is important to avoid tick bites as much as possible.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:



A ring-like red rash occurs in about 70 - 80 percent of cases and begins three to 32 days after the bite of an infected tick. The red rash at the bite site is circular and grows larger over a few days or a few weeks.

In the center, the rash usually clears and has been described as resembling a bull's-eye.

Generally, the rash is not painful.

Often this rash is accompanied by one or more symptoms: fatigue, chills and fever, headache, swollen lymph nodes, and joint and muscle pain.

An allergic reaction to tick saliva can often occur at the site of the bite. Such allergic reactions, which are not a sign of Lyme disease, usually occur within 72 hours, and disappear within a few days.

SYMPTOMS MAY APPEAR LATER

Some people are not diagnosed with Lyme disease in its initial stages because early symptoms are similar to those of other common diseases, such as a flu-like illness, and many infected persons do not recall being bit. Days, weeks, months or years later other symptoms can develop if the disease is not diagnosed and treated. Symptoms include fever, severe headache and stiff neck, certain heart irregularities, temporary paralysis of facial muscles, pain with numbness or weakness in the arms or legs, loss of concentration or memory problems, and, most commonly, Lyme arthritis.

WHAT IS

LYME DISEASE

PRACTICE THE 4 STEPS OF TICK PROTECTION



1. DRESS



2. DEFEND



3. CHECK



4. REMOVE

www.dupagehealth.org/ftb

DO I NEED A DOCTOR'S CARE?

Yes. If you experience a rash or any unexplained illness accompanied by a fever following a tick bite, you should consult your physician immediately.

IS IT TREATABLE?

Yes. Lyme disease is treatable with antibiotics.

HOW DO I PROTECT MYSELF?

Any time you are in a wooded area, wear light-colored, protective clothing, long-sleeved shirts, long trousers, boots or sturdy shoes, and a head covering. Tuck trouser cuffs in socks. Tape the area where pants and socks meet so ticks cannot crawl under clothing.

Apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothes. Apply sparingly to exposed skin. Be sure to wash treated skin after coming indoors.

Adults should apply repellents to children.

Walk in the center of trails so weeds do not brush against you.

Check for ticks every two hours. Ticks rarely transmit a disease until they have been attached for four hours or more.

If your pets spend time outdoors, check them for ticks.

WHAT IF A TICK IS FOUND?

Remove promptly. Do not burn the tick with a match or cover it with petroleum jelly. Do not use bare hands. The best way to remove a tick is to grasp it with tweezers as close to the skin as possible and firmly pull it straight out. If tweezers are not available, grasp the tick with a piece of tissue or cloth as a barrier to avoid direct contact.

Wash the bite area and your hands thoroughly with soap and water. Apply an antiseptic to the bite site immediately.